

Page K 4  
BALTIMORE SUN  
13 February 1977

## An Admiral for the CIA

The contrasts between Theodore Sorensen and Stansfield Turner do not reflect adversely on two men who, in diverse ways, are intellectually qualified to take over direction of the Central Intelligence Agency. But they do resurrect an old question about President Carter: Has he had enough experience in Washington affairs to have firm convictions on matters of national import? Mr. Sorensen, the first Carter choice for the CIA, was the quintessential civilian, a pacifist whose career was bracketed by service in the Kennedy White House and a law practice in New York. Admiral Turner is a career naval officer whose treatise on "The Naval Balance" in the current issue of *Foreign Affairs* has suddenly become must reading in Washington.

There is little in Admiral Turner's background that would disqualify him for the CIA directorship and much that recommends him. He ranked higher than Midshipman Carter in his class at the Naval Academy and went on to beat out the future President for a Rhodes scholarship at Oxford. He has an intellectual bent that produced a "Turner revolution" during his tenure as an exacting chief of the Naval War College. And he has a solid background in systems analysis and command posts, including his present command of NATO's southern flank.

CIA directors in the past have been drawn from politics, the "foreign policy establishment," the military and the intelligence community itself. Their effectiveness has depended not so much on their professional background as on their personalities and the circumstances un-

der which they have served. Nevertheless, it has long been national policy to avoid Pentagon domination of the CIA. The law requires that either the director or his deputy must come from civilian life. For the most part a military man has been preferred for the deputy role. This reflects a concern that a career military person will bring too parochial an outlook to his task and lose sight of the many diverse elements that produce the strength and stability of the nation.

Although there may be some merit in these concerns, Admiral Turner's *Foreign Affairs* article is reassuring. He rejects the "numbers game" used in raising the alarm about the Soviet naval threat and lucidly dissects the various elements required for a balanced assessment. It is the sort of exercise one should expect from a CIA director—cool, detached, and with a global perspective. Admiral Turner may or may not become "the next George Marshall" (in Mr. Carter's phrase), but the new President clearly would not be loathe to create one.

Which brings us back to a long-standing worry about the President. A chief executive who could acquiesce to the misgivings of hardliners about Mr. Sorensen and then name an appointee who is so obviously acceptable to them cannot, by definition, be very sure about what he wants from the CIA. Perhaps Mr. Carter believes it is enough to rely on brains and instincts, and go on from there. But eventually he will have to make intelligence judgments that will require more firmness of purpose than has been displayed in his CIA selections.